

Proposed River Heights Intermediate School Site Corona, California



Proposal to Collect, Vent and Monitor Methane Gas

Introduction

We invite you to review and comment on a plan to collect, vent and monitor methane gas in soil at the proposed River Heights Intermediate School site. The proposed site is on the southwest corner of Cleveland Avenue and Orange Street in Corona, in an unincorporated area of Riverside County. The area consists primarily of dairies, with residences located west and north of the site.

The plan, called a draft Removal Action Workplan (RAW), describes what we think is the best way to address methane gas at the site. If approved, the draft RAW will allow for the installation of a methane collection, venting and monitoring system to collect, treat and monitor the presence of methane gas under school structures. We believe this plan will protect future students, faculty, public health and the environment.

Our agency is the Department of Toxic Substances Control. Our role is to protect public health and the environment. We are overseeing the testing and cleanup at the site.

Also available for comment is a Notice of Exemption (NOE). This is our finding that the proposed actions (installation and monitoring) will not have a significant environmental effect.

Site history

Since 1948, the property was used for dairy operations. The operations included a milking barn, residences, storage, tanks, hay barns and water retention ponds built to contain wash water runoff. Dairy operations ceased in January 2004, and the site has been graded for new school construction.

Public Comment Period March 8 - April 7, 2005

Public comments on the draft RAW and NOE for the Proposed River Heights Intermediate School site must be postmarked or e-mailed no later than April 7, 2005, and sent to:

Ms. Stephanie Blanco
Project Manager
Dept. of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
E-mail: sblanco@dtsc.ca.gov

For more information or to request reasonable accommodation, contact Ms. Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist at (714) 484-5354.

The Corona-Norco School District (District) is the property owner and is responsible for building the proposed River Heights Intermediate School.

Methane gas found at the site

From February 2002 to October 2004 we oversaw the investigation of this site which included taking soil samples. Results showed the presence of methane gas, which is the chemical of concern at the site. The source of methane gas is believed to be cow manure. Methane gas is odorless and colorless. Exposure to methane gas does not pose a direct health risk. However, methane gas in soil could build up

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by regulating
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under the school buildings or crawl spaces at unsafe levels and potentially explode. The goal of the RAW is to prevent the build up of methane gas from happening.

Options considered

We looked at three treatment options for the site. Alternatives were screened and evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness, feasibility and cost:

- Alternative 1 - No Action
- Alternative 2 - Excavation and Offsite Disposal
- Alternative 3 - Installation of a Methane Collection and Passive Venting System, and Monitoring

We propose Alternative 3, because it will prevent the build up of methane gas, and protect human health and the environment. Alternative 3 can also be easily implemented and is cost effective.

Cow manure at the proposed site will break down over time and become harmless. Until this occurs, the proposed Methane Collection and Passive Venting System will vent the methane safely into the atmosphere. The proposed Passive Venting System will be installed in two school buildings next to the athletic field. Residents, school staff and students should not notice odors or noise from the Methane Collection and Passive Venting System.

Potential environmental impacts

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), we assessed potential environmental impacts that the proposed collection, venting and monitoring actions would cause. We found these actions would not significantly impact the environment. Therefore, we are proposing a Notice of Exemption (NOE).

How to submit your comments

The public comment period will begin March 8, 2005, and ends April 7, 2005, during which time you may provide us with your comments or questions on the draft RAW. All public comments must be postmarked or e-mailed by April 7, 2005 and sent to:

Ms. Stephanie Blanco, Project Manager
Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
E-mail: sblanco@dtsc.ca.gov

Before making a final decision on the draft RAW, we will consider and respond in writing to all comments received. If necessary, the draft RAW may be modified based on comments we receive.

Next steps

When the final RAW is approved, fieldwork (installation activities) may begin in spring 2005 and should take about six weeks. Field activities should not affect nearby properties. To ensure methane does not reach high levels, we will monitor for methane monthly. We will review monitoring results on a quarterly basis.

More information is available

The draft RAW, draft NOE, and other site documents are available for review at the following locations:

Norco Library
3954 Hamner Road
Norco, CA 92860
(951) 735-5329

Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
Contact: Ms. Julie Johnson at
(714) 484-5337 for an appointment

Corona-Norco Unified School District
Facilities Division
2820 Clark Avenue
Norco, CA 92860
Contact: Don Lussier at (951) 736-5045

For information on accessibility and to request reasonable accommodation, please contact:

Ms. Stacey Lear
Public Participation Specialist
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
(714) 484-5354
E-mail: slear@dtsc.ca.gov

Who to contact for more information

If you have questions regarding the proposed project, please contact Ms. Stephanie Blanco, Project Manager at (714) 484-5433 or Ms. Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist at (714) 484-5354. If you have questions about the proposed River Heights Intermediate School, please contact the Corona-Norco Unified School District at the number shown above.

Media Inquiries

For media inquiries, please contact:

Ms. Jeanne Garcia
Public Information Officer
Department of Toxic Substances Control
(818) 551-2176

Our department's website

For more information about our department, please visit our website at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

Notice to the hearing impaired

You can get more information by using the California State Relay Service at 1-888-877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Ms. Stacey Lear at (714) 484-5354.

Para información en español por favor comuníquese con Leticia Hernández al número (714) 484-5488.

Public Comment Form and Mailing Coupon
Proposed River Heights Intermediate School Site
Corona, California

You can use this form to send in your written public comments on the Proposed River Heights draft Removal Action Workplan (RAW). You may also ask to be added or deleted from the project mailing list. If you know of anyone or organizations that would like to be on the project mailing list, please use this form to add that information. Please address all mailings to Ms. Stephanie Blanco, Project Manager, 5796 Corporate Avenue, Cypress, California, 90630. You may also e-mail this same information to sblanco@dtsc.ca.gov.

Reminder: All written public comments on the Draft Removal Action Workplan must be postmarked or e-mailed by April 7, 2005.

Name: _____

Organization (optional): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (optional): _____ Fax (optional): _____

☐ Please add me to the Proposed River Heights project mailing list.

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Public Comments (attach additional pages if needed): _____

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